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EARTH-AND-SKY

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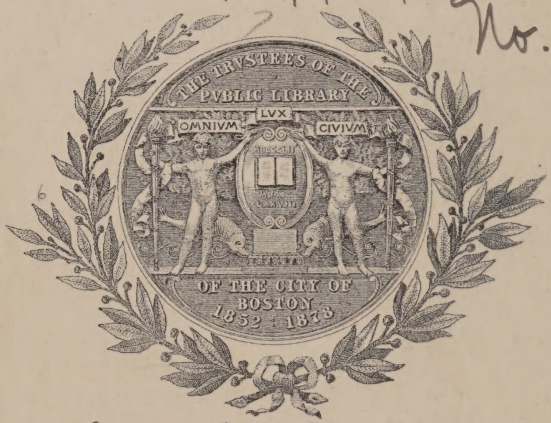

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EARTH AND SKY

NUMBER ONE

A FIRST AND SECOND GRADE
NATURE READER AND TEXT-BOOK

BY

J. H. STICKNEY

AUTHOR OF STICKNEY'S READERS, "PETS AND COMPANIONS," ETC

PUBLIC LIBRARY

REVISED EDITION

CITY OF BOSTON

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612.11
Ginn + Company
April 12, 1913.

The Athenæum Press
GINN & COMPANY · PROPRIETORS · BOSTON · U.S.A.

PREFACE

The broad title "Earth and Sky" stands for a series of graded reading which is elsewhere continued to cover the period of childhood. As soon as a reasonably clear sense of the powers of letters and syllables has been attained, such as it is the work of a primer to accomplish, a child will easily make his way with this first volume of the series. It is adapted either to home or school, needing only such help as an intelligent, interested older person can supply.

A glance along the pages will show the variety of points in Nature's wide *repertoire* which are brought within the field of natural expression. It has been our aim to suggest the entire world as it lies about us in our infancy. Later perspective pathways of the child are opened in the lines of geography, botany, zoölogy, chemistry, physics, and astronomy.

The book aims to be something more than a supplementary reader, to be passed over lightly for facility in reading. It is hoped that until a better one shall be provided it may be accepted as a guide or manual for elementary work in nature study.

The kindly comments which met the earlier edition of the book encouraged the improvement in text and illustration which appears in its present form.

The following words selected from the readings show at how many points contact is made with objects of nature.

Earth, sky, sun, moon, stars. — Water, gravel, sand, stone, soil, clay, air. — Wind, weather, rain, snow, tempest, thunder, lightning. — Sunshine, moonlight, shadow, rainbow, clouds. — Spring, summer, autumn, winter. — Ocean, river, spring, brook. — Sounds, colors, beauty, order, kindness, providence, care, cruelty, death. — Beasts, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, spiders. — Trees, flowers, plants, fruits, seeds, ferns, grass.

The object of so wide a range of subjects has been to awaken interest in observing nature rather than to communicate facts; to open the way for later knowledge rather than to force it prematurely.

EARTH AND SKY

Number One

Part I. Springtime

WELCOME

All the earth is glad.
Spring is coming.
Are you sure? Who told you?
Pussy willow told me first.
Bluebird told me next, then robin.
South wind and warm rain say so.
Birds and brooks are singing it.
Sunshine makes us feel it.
Our hearts tell us it is near.
What shall we say in answer?
Come, springtime, come fast!

BIRDS IN SPRING

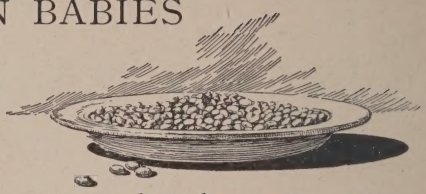
Where shall we look for spring?
Up! up! up! Up in the tree.
Up in the top of the tree.
What is it? Don't you see?
Why, a nest for little birdies!
What a nice place to live!
It is away from the cats.
It is too high for boys.
It is half hid by leaves.
Mother bird brings food.
Father bird helps her do it.
Little ones grow and grow.
By and by the nest will be empty.
Can you think why?
Where will the little ones sleep when they outgrow the nest?

BIRD HOMES

Do you know how nests are made?
The tools are birds' feet and bills.
Some nests are made of hay.
Some are made of mud or clay.
Some birds use twine or hair or moss.

And some use twigs and roots.
Each bird knows what it wants.
Watch for these little home makers.
You will see them at their work.
Could you make a nest?
You can make nest shapes with clay.

BEAN BABIES



Beans! What are they for?

Are we going to cook them?

No; I will plant them in soft earth.

Each one is a seed cradle. The babies are inside.

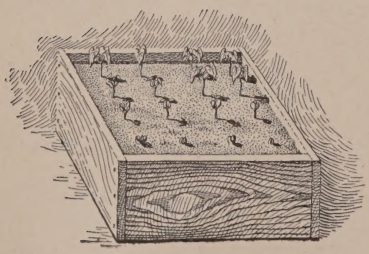
Are they alive? They do not look so.

Water will wake them up.

Sunshine will tell them it is time for them to stretch and grow.

The baby food is in the cradles.

Water will make it soft, like nice soup.



We will plant a few of the beans in this wet sawdust.

TWO SUPPERS

Cherries are ripe!

Eva and Ted went into the garden. They found a little table set.

It was under a tree. "Who did it?" asked Ted. "It is for us," said Eva. They asked sister May if she knew who set it.

It was not brother Ben. It was their dear mother.

What do you think was on the table? Bread, cake, and cherries.

They sat down to have supper.

They did not forget to say thanks.

Two happy robins came to the tree.

They found a table spread for them.
It was in the tree top.
They helped themselves.
Their supper was insects and cherries.
Who spread their table?
Mother Nature.
Did they say thanks, do you think?
They sang them.
Birds at supper up in the tree.
Children at supper under the tree.
The good Father loves them both.

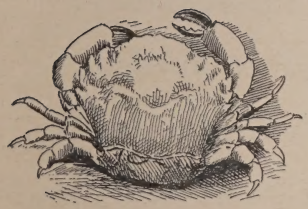
OTHER CHILDREN

This little fellow comes to us in the spring.

He sleeps all winter down in the mud.

Spring comes and wakes him up.

What great jumps he takes!



This one lives by the sea.

He can crawl or he can swim.

He knows when springtime is near.

The sun warms his shell.

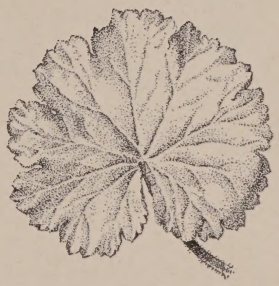
Do you know how a crab walks?

LEAF AND FLOWER BUDS

What a pretty plant!
Is it for me?
Did it come from a seed?
No, it grew from a little leaf bud.
It is small now.
Count its leaves.
Find some buds.
There will be more.
We cannot see them.
They are waiting to grow.
Let us help them grow.
Each of us can do something.
I will give the plant water.
I will set it in the sunshine.

I will keep the room warm.

The earth in the flower-pot will do the rest.



Leaf buds will come.

They grow into green leaves.

Flower buds will come.

They open and make bright flowers.

The flowers grow in clusters.

Count the buds in the first cluster.

The leaves have deep veins.

The flower clusters will be pink, or red, or white.

Do you know this plant's name?

It is geranium.

THE BEAN BABIES AGAIN

Look at our sawdust seed garden. Take up some of the plants.

Look at our beans.

Are they the ones we planted?

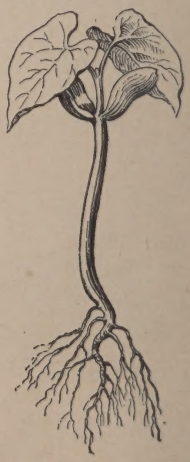
Oh! oh! This cradle has split.

The old bean is just like a shell.

Find the wee baby. It is green.

Here is one that has a bit of a root.

This tall one has two green leaves.



Look at the poor wrinkled old cradle.

It has done its work.

Its baby is a plant now.

Bean plants must go and live in the ground.

They need earth, water, and sunlight.

We will see you again, little sisters.

We want to know how fast you grow.

We must look at you every morning.

Do you know how tall you will be?

Did your bean mother tell you?

Some of you will have tall poles to cling to.

Have you heard about red flowers?

Have you heard of long pods full of little oval beans in pretty rows?

You will have them in a few weeks.

Then some one will pick your fat pods.

What will they do with them?

I must whisper the answer to that.

Never mind. You won't care. It is good to be of use.

EARTH STARS

Stars in the grass!
Bright yellow stars.
One, two, three, four, — ever so many.
Did they fall from the sky?

Beth had never seen them before.

Look, Beth, and see for yourself.

No. They grew from the ground.

Each stands on a tall, smooth stem.

What odd leaves! So full of notches and so close to the ground.

Here is a bud. Look at it.
Its little wrap is turned back.

Our star flower is a dandelion.

It is like a rosette made of baby ribbon.

The dandelion is not a single flower, it is a bouquet of flowers.

We will take one bouquet apart to see the single flowers.

Look! Each of us has a tiny flower with a long yellow flag.

The dandelion mother must be very rich, she puts so many flowers into one.

But what a pretty show it makes!

I like these little living stars that are so near.

Dandelions do not like to be picked.

The flowers close and fade. We will enjoy them where they grow.

SKY QUESTIONS

I like to look up into the sky.
How soft and blue it is to-day!
Does every place have sky over it?
What else could it have?
How far away are you, Sky?
If I were a kite I would go and see.
See the soft white clouds.
What holds them up so high?
They are sailing slowly away.
I wonder where they go.
They look like flocks of sheep.
That is what they are,— Bo-Peep's flock of sheep.
Don't you know who Bo-Peep is?
She is the bright sun.

BO-PEEP

Bo-Peep is the sun's baby name.

Is it not a pretty one?

All day long she roams over the sky.

She starts in the east. She goes home to the west at night.

At noon she is high over our heads.

She goes out every day with her sheep.

Sometimes she cannot find them.

What kind of a day is it then?

Tell the story of Bo-Peep and her flock.

It begins "Little Bo-Peep has lost— "

White sheep, white sheep, on a blue hill,
When the wind stops you all stand still;
When the wind blows you walk about — *slow* —
White sheep, white sheep, where do you go?

THE STORY-TELLER

What do you do *first* every day?

See if I can tell you.

I think you look up into the sky.

You want to read its story for the day that is beginning.

The clouds help tell the stories.

What are some of these sky stories?

There are soft, warm, fleecy clouds.

There are dark gray rain clouds.

Bo-Peep sometimes wears a thick veil that hides her bright face.

We do not like that story.

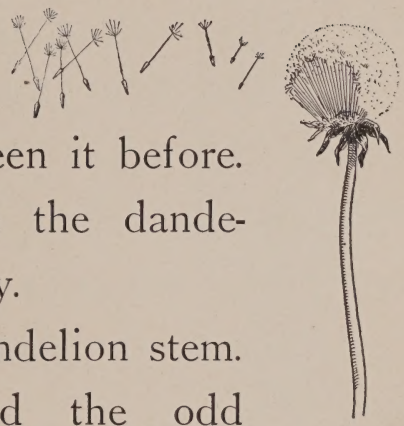
Some days have two stories.

Dear Bo-Peep, we like to see you.

Get the wind to lift your veil.

Your sunset stories are the best of all.

A SURPRISE



Something new in the grass.

Beth had not seen it before.

It stood where the dandelions grew in May.

It was on a dandelion stem.

The plant had the odd notched leaves down close to the ground.

Was it a new kind of dandelion?

Beth asked her mother.

"See, mother," she said; "it is a light, white ball.

It is as light as a feather."

"Blow it with your breath, dear. Where is it now?

What is left in your hand?"

"A stem with a green knob at the end of it."

"Those light things are dandelion seeds. They have blown away.

New dandelions will grow from some of them next year.

Listen to the dandelion story:

In early spring there is a flower
With lovely yellow hair;
This soon grows gray, then blows away,
And leaves its head quite bare."

Little Beth likes now to play she is the wind's child.
She goes around sowing dandelion seeds.
Can she send them as far away as her wind mother does?
See what strong breaths *you* can blow.

YELLOW WINGS

"I had something in my hat for you, auntie.

I tried to hold it, but it got away.

Do you see it anywhere?

It was yellow and so very pretty!"

"You have n't told me what it was," said auntie.

"Can't you guess? It was a butterfly.

I caught it on a flower.

I put my hat over it. There it is now on that blossom.

See! It is as yellow as butter.

See if I can catch it again."

"I would n't. It likes to be free.

See it fan its pretty wings.

Butterfly wings have no feathers.

See how small the butterfly is, and what big wings it has.

They are like the sails of a boat.

They are as soft as silk.

They can open and shut like a book.

The butterfly is getting sweets now.

How still it is. You cannot hear a sound.

Watch it. It has a long tongue.

The tongue will reach into the flower."

"Could we see the tongue?"

"No, it would be curled up.

We cannot get near enough to see it.

It uncurls it to get sweets."

A CATERPILLAR

Fuzzy caterpillar! Oh, do not crawl away!

I wish to talk to you a minute.

Mamma says you can spin thread.

She says you spin your own cradle.

That is a funny thing to do.

Mamma and I found one on a fence.

It looked like a soft, woolly ball.

A caterpillar was asleep in it.

I did not touch it. I never hurt any living thing.

I went to look at it every day.

Where shall you spin yours?

I would like to see the kind you make.

THE CATERPILLAR AGAIN

Shall you go to sleep soon?
But you will wake up.

You will not be a caterpillar then, but a butterfly.

Mamma says you will make a beautiful one.

You will be brown with red and orange velvet spots.

You will have a tiny body, but great wide wings.

You will not crawl then. You will fly swiftly.

You will go through the air as the birds do.

I think you will like it much better.

You have to go slowly now. Then you will be able to go swiftly.

I hope I shall see you when you fly.

If you remember me, light on my hand to let me know it is you.

You know I would not hurt you.

We must catch all the little moth millers. They will eat holes in our clothes to make their cradles. And we must burn the cradles of the moths that spoil trees and vines.

BEES

Look out! there are bees.

One is on the flower.

Are they bumblebees?

No, they are honeybees.

Would they sting me?

Not if you let them alone.

Watch and see how busy they are.

They go from flower to flower to get all the honey they can carry; then they will go to their hive.

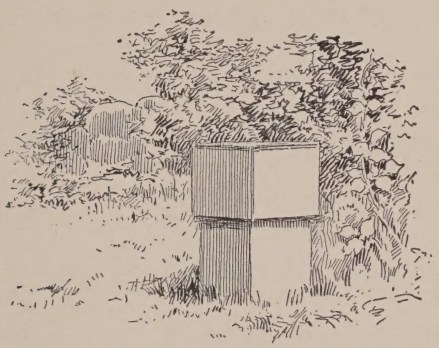
Is the hive a nest?

It is more like a cupboard.

Did the bees make it all themselves?

No; bees could not make a box.

People make hives for their bees to fill with cells and honey.



The people want the honey to eat.

They do not take it all; that would be cruel.

Wild bees find holes in trees.

Look at the shape of the cells.

Some of them are cradles for young bees, and some are cupboards for honey.

We call these cells honey-comb.

Beebread is stored in cells.

It is sticky till it grows hard.

The bees collect it themselves.

They get beebread too.

Never disturb a busy honeybee.

Do you know how honey looks and how it tastes?

It is the sweetest thing we know.

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower!

How skillfully she builds her cell!
How neat she spreads her wax!
And labors hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes!

In works of labor or of skill
I would be busy too;
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

DR. WATTS

BEES' BREAKFASTS

There must be something for the bees' breakfasts.

Do you think Mother Earth cares for the bees? I do.

They find the things they like best.

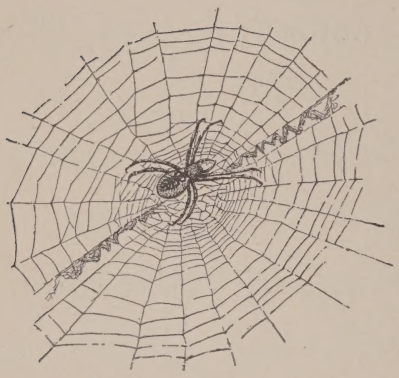
This white clover in the picture is one of the things.

They suck its sweet juice and turn it into honey.

Then the clover is just as good for the cows' breakfast.

It is just as pretty for us to see.

WATCHING A SPIDER



Baby Ben was lost.

Where did I find him?

In the attic at play.

What was he doing?

Watching a spider.

"A pretty, pretty spider!" he said.

I did not think so.

"See spider run!" he said.

It ran to its home.

The home was a web.

The web was in a corner.

I held Ben up to see it.

"Make the spider come down," he said.

"The spider wants its dinner. It wants to catch a fly."

Spider did not like to be watched.
It wanted to get away.
So it made a fine thread.
It swung on it to the wall.
"Run, little eight feet!" I said.
"Will it come back?" asked Ben.
"Not while we are here watching.
Picture spiders do not run away.
We will find a picture of a spider.
I will tell a spider story."

Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet
Eating curds and whey.
There came a big spider
And sat down beside her
And frightened Miss Muffet away.

SWEET-PEA BLOSSOMS

We are the children of the pea family.

They call us Sweet Peas.

Every one says we are pretty.

We have all the colors there are.

We come in spring and stay till frost comes.

We are not so silly as to be vain.

The butterflies come to see us.

We have sweets to give them.

One of them thought we were butterflies too.

"Come away!" it said; "come away!"

It thought our petals were wings.

"Oh, you can't!" it said when it came close. "You are all tied. I would not like to be a prisoner." And away it flew.

Then a queen girl came and took ever so many of us away.

We were glad we had grown for her. It was better than flying away.

Here are sweet peas on tiptoe for a flight —
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,
And taper fingers catching at all things,
To bind them all about with tiny rings.

A PEA STORY

We have very pretty petals.
Two inside ones make a sort of hood.
The next two are a high collar.
The outer one is like a banner or flag.
Our hoods and collars are different colors.
The flag may be another color still.

TWIN CHILDREN

Rock-a-by, baby, on a tree top.
When the wind blows the cradle will rock.

A baby on a tree top? What baby?

This kind of baby grows there.

All these babies grow in pairs.

Is not that an odd way?

The wind rocks their cradles.
It sings them to sleep.
At last they fly away.
How can they fly?
The wind helps them.

Here is one pair to show how they look.

See! Each baby has a long narrow wing.

The twins have a pair of wings.

They are brown and dry when they fly.

Do you know these twin seed babies?

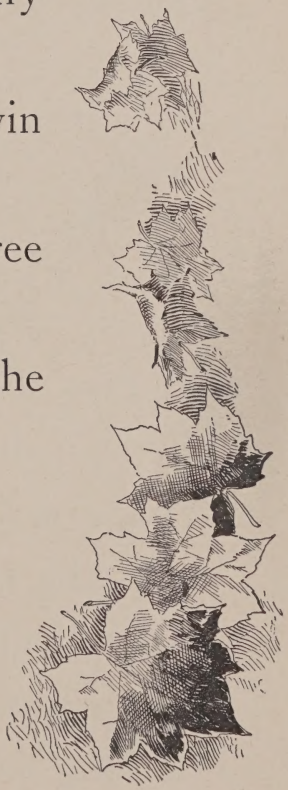
Can you tell what tree they grow on?

Here are some of the tree's leaves.

Do you know them?

Can you find such a tree anywhere?

Watch for it when autumn comes.



THREE COUSINS

"Katy did! Katy did! She did! She did!"

This is what a big green grasshopper keeps saying.

It is all he knows how to say.

So he says it over and over.

He says it with his wings and legs.

The meadow grasshopper on the next page is his cousin.

He is the color of dry grass, but he is a very lively little fellow.

What great jumps he can take!

His long legs are the jumpers.

They fold like a fan.

The third cousin is the cricket.
He likes to live with us in the house.
Did you ever catch a cricket?
Some are black and some are green.

They have a cheerful song.
We try to think where it comes from.
When we look he is somewhere else.
It seems very sly of him to cheat us so.
Is n't it fun to catch grasshoppers?

"Give us some molasses," the boys sometimes say.

Grasshoppers have something like molasses in their mouths.

Sometimes they will drop some in our hands.

Look for grasshoppers in the grass on hot, dry summer days.

They are not birds or fishes or beasts. What are they?

MORE CHILDREN

Every live thing is a child.

Butterflies are insect children.

Bees, wasps, and flies are insects.

Most insects wake with the spring.

Spring wakes some very big children.

If you watch you may see a tree waking up.

It has thousands of children too.

Tree children are buds and shoots.

Which would you like best to be, a shoot growing on a tall tree, or a slip set in the ground?

A tree is like a city full of people.

There are more of them than you could count.

What a big city a forest is!

LITTLE JACK'S BREAKFAST

Five good things had little Jack for his breakfast.

See where they came from.

A brown hen laid the egg he ate.

A cow gave the milk he liked so well.

Grain for bread and mush grew in the wheat field.

The red-cheeked apple grew on a tree.

All these are good for Jack.

They make him healthy and strong.

Jack knows well who gives us these good things.

He thanks his Heavenly Father for them every day.

Out of the good earth other things come that Jack is glad to have.

The sky bends over the earth and helps to bring them.

It gives the warm rain and the bright sunshine, which make things grow.

Jack does not eat the green grass and the bright flowers, but he enjoys them.

Sometimes he has a bunch of flowers on the breakfast table.

God might have made the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,
The oak tree and the cedar tree,
And not a flower at all.
We might have had enough, enough
For every want of ours,
For luxury, medicine, and toil,
And yet have had no flowers.

HUNGRY BEARS

There are big creatures that come with the spring. One of them is the bear.

All winter he has been in a cave fast asleep.

When spring comes he yawns and grunts and stretches; after a while he is wide awake.

When he went into the cave he was plump and fat.

Now he is lean and hungry.

How hungry? Why, as hungry as a bear, and cross as a bear too.

Let 's play bears, Willie.

I 'll get mamma's big black rug.

This was on a live bear once.

I will put the rug over us. Now I am the big bear. You are my cub.

It is spring now; we are waking up.

Hark! I hear some one coming.

No one shall hurt you, little cub.

I will growl. You must growl too.

If they come near, we must hug them.

That is the way bears do. They kill people by hugging sometimes.

It is dark here. Play we are in our cave.

Here comes mamma. Let 's hug her.

We must n't hug too hard.

"Dinner time! Any hungry boys here?" called some one.

"Bears, mamma. We are bears!"

"I like boys better in my house."

WILD AND TAME

This is a pet fox.
He is a beauty, is he not?
Dick's papa got him in the woods.
He caught him in a steel trap.
Wild foxes live in holes.
Our fox has a house.
He has a chain too.
Why does he have to be chained?

I wish he would lie down.

He curls up like a cat.

See his big tail!

It looks like a brush.

Foxes are sly and cunning.

What would he like to do?

"Fox, what do you think geese and rabbits are made for?"

"Made for me to eat, to be sure."

How may we know a fox?

Some foxes are silvery gray. This is a red fox.

All foxes have sharp ears and bright eyes and a bushy tail.

Look at his pointed nose.

How do you know he is not a dog?

IN HIS OWN HOUSE

This boy is taking a walk.
What is it that he finds?
Tap! tap!
"Are you there, turtle?
Come out; do come out.
Are you hiding from me?
He may be asleep. I will tap again.

Won't you please put your head out of your shell for me, turtle?

Thank you. Now let me see you walk a little way.

You do not walk very fast.

You have to carry your house with you.

Are you on your way to the pond?

You can swim well, I am sure.

Do you like best to be in the water?

What made you stop walking?

Why do you draw your head in?

I will not hurt you at all.

Well, good-by. I 'm going now.

Some boys turn turtles over and then go away and leave them.

I don't see any fun in giving pain.

Let me see your under shell."

CHILDREN OF THE SEA

Here are some more of the children of the spring.

They live in the water. It is their home. Some of them cling to the rocks.

The sea waves bring them up to the shore. These children are looking for them on the beach.

Boys and girls like to watch them.

One kind is like a glass of yellow jelly poured out on a plate.

One is shaped like a star.

The picture shows what it is like.

A great many kinds live in shells. Their bodies are soft. The shells are their houses. Each one of them is a nature child. It has a life of its own.

All of them are relations of ours. We owe them kind feeling.

Some are good for food. All are interesting to study. They help to make earth a good place for a home.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful —
The Lord God made them all.

EARTH'S LITTLE MASTER

How fast the baby grows!

He is quite like a boy.

My pea and bean babies grow fast too.

They grow faster than our baby does.

How old is our baby, mamma?

He is almost eleven months old.

Hear him laugh and talk; very soon he will stand on his feet.

This bean is only two weeks old; *this* one is a month old.

The pea vine is six weeks old.

It does not stand alone.

No, it will never stand alone.

It must always cling to something.

Baby clings with his hands.

He does not feel safe without something to cling to.

Let us see what the pea vine clings with.

It has little fingers that curl.

How tightly they hold! Bean vines and grape vines have them.

I see a bud on the pea vine.

It will have flowers soon.

Will they be its children?

I am glad our baby does not grow up so fast.

He will have a long, long life.

The pea vines live only one summer, but they leave pods full of seeds for many more vines.

When the baby is a bigger boy he will go to school.

He will then learn about the other kinds of children.

Some of the animals have to be taught to do things too.

When baby is a man perhaps he may own a field, with grass and fruits and trees.

He may have a horse, a cow, a dog, a cat, and other animals of his own.

He is the best baby of them all, is he not?

HOW THE SPRING CAME

Spring is growing up; is n't it a pity?
She was such a little thing and so very pretty.
Summer is extremely grand; we must pay her duty;
But it is to little Spring that she 'll owe her beauty.

Who can tell how Spring came? First she made a little call. Soon she came again. Birds came with her.

North and East Winds drove them back for a few days.

South Wind was her good friend. She coaxed her to stay.

"I will help you unpack your nice dresses," Spring said to the violets.

What pretty dresses she brings! She lets the plants wear them.

What nice taste she has! She likes pretty shapes, and uses good colors.

When wake the violets, Winter dies;
    When sprout the elm buds, Spring is near;
When lilacs blossom, Summer cries,
    "Bud, little roses, Spring is here."

How pretty is each little star,
    Each tiny twinkler, soft and meek!
Yet many in this world there are
    Who do not know that stars can speak.

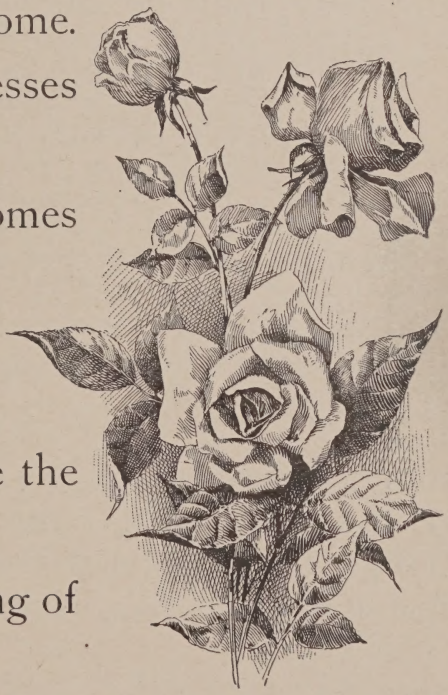
Hush! listen! ah, it will not do;
    You do but listen with your ears;
And stars are understood by few,
    For it must be the heart that hears.

Spring *Summer*

Autumn *Winter*

Part II. Summer and Autumn

THE KING



Summer has come.

What thick dresses the trees have!

What shady homes the birds have!

We cannot see their snug nests.

The cattle like the cool shade.

The sun is king of the world now.

Look out for him at noonday. He has begun to paint your cheeks.

He will show you how strong he is if you let him try.

Summer is the time for roses and all the garden flowers. If the sun is king, the rose may be queen.

Fruits are coming as fast as they can.

Hurrah for berries and sweet plums!

Hurrah for peaches!

Make haste and grow, apples, grapes, and all garden goodies!

All that we see rejoices in the sunshine;
All that we hear makes merry in the rain.
God grant us such a mind to be glad after our kind,
And to sing his praises evermore in everything.

THE SUN

JOHN. Look at the sun. It is like fire. It blinds my eyes. I never saw it so bright before.

PAPA. Don't look at it too long. It will hurt your eyes if you do.

JOHN. I wish it would go away, it makes me so hot.

PAPA. Come under this tree; the leaves will be a good sunshade. What if the sun *should* go away, John?

JOHN. It would be night all the time; but we should have stars, and the moon would be here.

PAPA. No, John; if the sun went, the moonlight would go too.

We should lose the trees and shrubs and the green grass.

There would be no beautiful flowers.

There would be no grain for food.

All the animals would soon die.

We should die too. We should freeze without sunlight, or starve without food.

Some things we might do without; we could not live without the sun.

We must not forget to thank God for all his gifts.

JOHN. The sunlight makes nice shadows, does n't it? How much cooler it is under the thick green tree!

I can look up at the sun now. It does not blind my eyes. Look up at it through the branches, papa.

THE WIND'S FROLIC

Do you know what a good frolic is?

I can tell you. I am Wind.

One day I had great fun. I blew dandelion seeds about. I played shuttlecock with them.

I made the leaves and branches shake on the trees.

I sent dust into the children's eyes.

I took Nell's hat off her head.

I carried Bob's kite away.

Grandpa's umbrella turned inside out.

I shook apples from the trees.

I slammed doors and rattled windows.

At sunset I stopped. I was tired.

So was every one else.

Night came and put tired people to sleep in their beds.

Where did I sleep? No one knows.

AUTUMN BABIES

Six green cradles! They are full of little babies too, all fast asleep.

The cradle is called a pod.

These babies are not seen in spring.

Jack Frost will find them in autumn.

Then the cradles will open wide.

Do the babies fall out?

They know better; they fly out.

They have no feet; they seem to fly.

The Wind plays with them.

They go anywhere with him.

Do they never go home again?

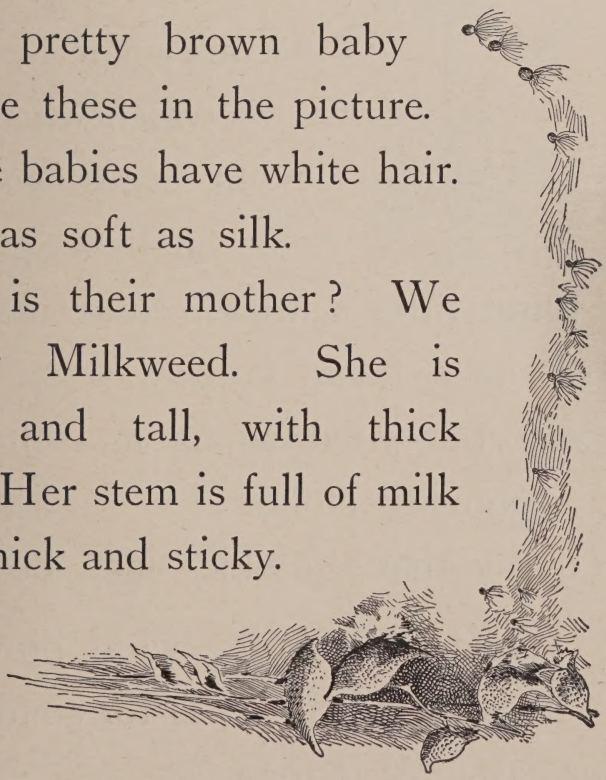
No. They sleep where they fall till spring comes, and then some of them begin to grow.

Each pretty brown baby looks like these in the picture.

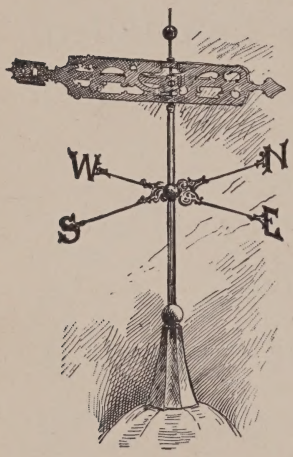
These babies have white hair.

It is as soft as silk.

Who is their mother? We call her Milkweed. She is straight and tall, with thick leaves. Her stem is full of milk that is thick and sticky.



THE WEATHER SENTINEL



"Tell me, good weather vane, tell me true,
What kind of a day it will be."
"Look where I point, and watch what I do;
Soon, very soon, you shall see."

"Kind little sentinel, child of the air,
Do me a favor, I pray;
Coax the good winds and the quick-moving clouds
To say that the skies may be fair."

Which way is the wind blowing?

N is for north. S is for south. E is for east. W is for west.

STARS

The sky is most wonderful at night.

Harry was going to bed.

From his window he saw the stars.

"They wink and blink at me, mamma," he said.

"Where are they in the daytime?"

"The stars are there, but the light is too bright to let them be seen."

Just then a little white cloud came by.

"The stars play hide and seek," said Harry. "I can see them from my bed.

I will keep my curtain up.

The cloud is the star's curtain.

I am going to see how many stars I can count from my crib."

Harry thinks he got to twenty.

Then his eyelids fell. *They* were curtains too.

Can any one count the stars?

God knows them all.

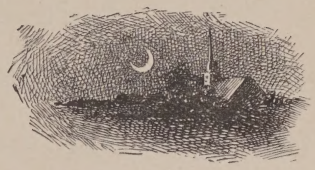
THE STARS

All night long the little stars blink;
All night long they twinkle and wink;
All night long, when we 're fast asleep,
Their eyes shine bright as they peep, peep, peep.
But what do they do when daylight comes?

When the sun wakes up and the big round eye
Stares and stares at the big round sky,
The little stars nestle right down in their nest,
And their bright eyes close while they rest, rest, rest.
And that 's what they do when the daylight comes.

THE MOON

Ruth and Sam were talking about the moon.



Sam said it was round.

"Oh, no!" said Ruth. "I saw it last night; it looked like half an apple."

"No; it is like a boat," said Sam. "I saw it myself last week."

"It is not always the same shape," said their mother, who sat near.

"There is a moon visit every month. At first it is like Sam's boat. We

call it the new moon. In a few nights it is like half an apple. Again it is as round as the sun."

"Does it go away after that?" asked Ruth.

"No. It begins to grow smaller, and we have the half moon again. We call that the last half.

The boat shape is the quarter moon,

and the round moon is the full moon.

Then for a while we have no moon.

Did you ever see the moon by daylight? It is very pale then.

The moon is never as bright as the sun. We talk of the golden sun, but of the silver moon.

We can always look at the moon. We cannot always look at the sun."

LITTLE FISHES

"May I have a cent, mother, to buy a fish?" asked Walter.

"Buy a fish? Where can you buy a fish for a cent?"

"They sell a live one for a cent at the market.

May I, mamma? All the children are buying them."

"What will you do with it, Walter?"

"Why, keep it in a big bowl and watch it."

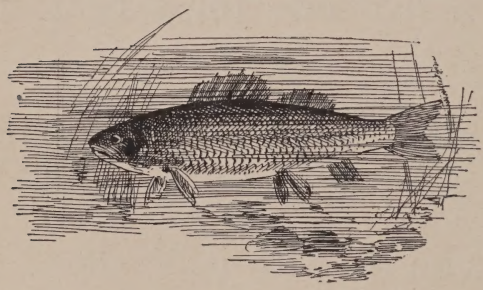
"It will not live long in a bowl. It needs more water to swim in."

"It would not live long anyway at the market, and I will put it in the pond in a day or two.

Thank you for the cent. I will go and buy the fish now."

Walter soon came back again.

"Here is the fish. Isn't it a fine one?"



It was as long as his longest finger.

"Look at its eyes. They have no lids. Can it see?

How flat and thin it looks! Is it hungry, do you think?

Its tail looks like a fan. How it keeps moving!"

"The fish is the bird of the water," said Walter's mother.

See, Walter; these fins are its wings.

The next ones are its legs. There is one underneath to keep it steady. See what each fin does when the fish goes forward or turns.

What a fine dress a fish has!"

"Where, mamma?" asked Walter.

"A dress of shining scales. Look at it. See how the scales are laid over each other.

It is like the roof of a house."

"Fishes breathe with gills," said Walter. "See the gills under the gill covers on each side of the head."

"Who told you?" asked his mother.

"The boys said so. A fish cannot live out of water.

See it swim! I like to watch it."

"I kept some larger fishes once a long time in a pond," said mamma.

"I fed them and they grew tame. They would eat from my hand.

I was fond of them and they seemed to know me. After a while they died."

"You said the fish died, mamma," said Walter. "Does everything die?"

"Yes. Living things have their life-time. The little Mayflies die in a day. Butterflies do not live long.

Some plants live one summer; some live two. Some live a long time.

Some animals live very long lives."

THE GARDEN

It is past the middle of June.

We call it midsummer.

How have the things we planted in spring been growing?

How big are the apples on the trees?

Let us go out into the garden and see for ourselves.

Some of our berries should be ripe.

Yes. Here are ripe, red strawberries.

We can pick peas and beans for our dinner.

Corn will soon be ready to eat.

There will be something for us every day until frost comes.

How could so much come from the little seeds and buds of spring?

April, May, June, what busy months you have been!

How wonderful everything is!

Let us study the vegetables and fruits and flowers.

Perhaps we can find out some of their ways of growing.

THE TOMATO

Here is another form of life.

What is it?

Do we call it a fruit or is it a vegetable?

Does it come up of itself?

Does it grow on a tree or on a vine?

Does the plant live over winter?

Let it tell its own story:

"I am round and smooth and red.

I am a summer vegetable. I am full of juice, but it is not sweet.

I have sections like the orange, but there is no skin between to hold them.

I grow so fast they get queer shapes.

My seeds are yellow. See how prettily they grow. One kind of tomato is yellow. They call me the love apple sometimes.

Have I told my story well?"

ORANGES

The orange is a fruit.

Where do oranges grow? What are they for? What story can they tell?

An orange tree has thick, glossy leaves and pretty buds and blossoms.

Orange blossoms are white and sweet.

The petals fade and fall off, and little green balls are seen.

These balls grow to be as large as apples.

Then the green fruit turns yellow.

We wait a little for it to grow sweet.

The inside pulp has eight or more sections.

What is inside the sections?

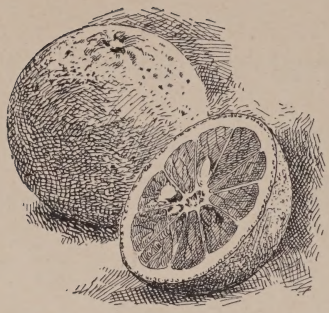
Nice little sacs of juice.

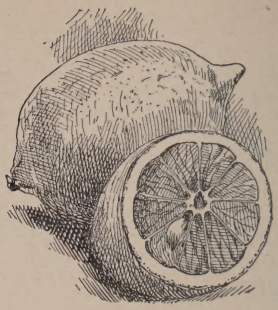
What care the orange takes of its rich juice!

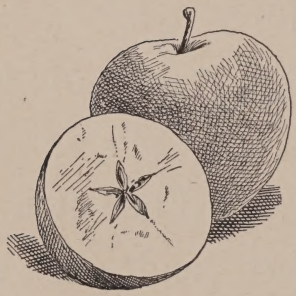
It has little sacs for it. Then it has sections to hold the sacs, and peel to go over all.

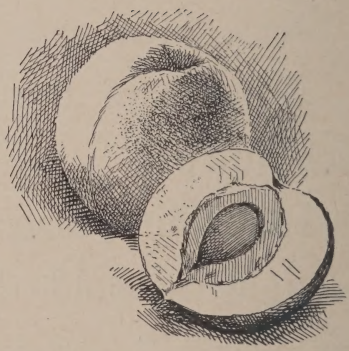
Is not this a dainty way to grow?

An orange tree may have buds, blossoms, green and ripe fruit all at the same time.









Here are some other subjects for study. Remember you are to think how life behaves in every one.

It is good practice to try to tell the stories. The orange, the tomato, and the potato are given as models.

Below are some words that will be of use.

peel	skin	core	sacs	stone
thin	thick	smooth	rough	sweet
tender	tough	fuzzy	porous	acid
round	oval	creases	dimples	juicy
singly	clusters	cheeks	sections	kernel

short-stemmed long-stemmed

without stem

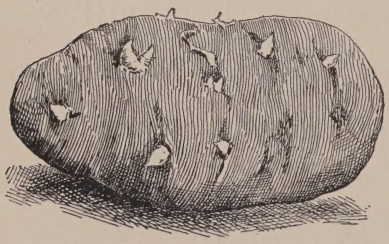
POTATO CHILDREN

Look! Such queer potatoes!

They are all alive, I do believe!

Did the potato think it was a flower-pot?

These little plants are potato children.



All potatoes begin to grow in this way.

Why did n't it wait to be put into the ground?

It was in a hurry to begin growing.

Count the plant children we find in this one potato.

Some of them are just beginning to grow.

See! We call these potato eyes.

See the little dimples they grow in.

We will cut out one or two eyes.

Won't that kill them?

Not if we leave them a little bit of potato to feed upon till roots grow.

Now they can go into the ground.

When the potato children come up we will watch them.

Where will the new potatoes be when they grow? In the ground.

We see only stems, leaves, and flowers.

How shall we know when the potatoes are ripe?

The stems and leaves will die. Then the men will dig for the new potatoes.

They must take care not to cut them.

THE ONION'S STORY

Here is a very interesting vegetable. Let it tell its story:

"I am an onion. I am growing just to be eaten. A few of us were saved to grow seed. Some children do not like my strong taste and smell.

The doctors say I do people good.

I like myself very much. You should see how I grow.

I wrap myself up in tight little wraps.

The bigger I grow the more wraps I put on. I do not mind how hot it is; I go on making new jackets. When I am full-grown I have a dozen or more. I wear three or four waterproof wraps when I am ripe.

The lilies are my cousins. They have flowers with sweet scent. I am as useful as they, if I am not so pretty and sweet.

We make our jackets under ground.

The cabbage and lettuce make jackets too, but they do not wear them so tight. They try to be as big as they can, and they make their jackets above ground. Our family do not like that way. People call what we make a bulb. Cabbage and lettuce only make heads, or crowns of leaves.

Roses sometimes make thick jackets.

They use theirs to cover their seeds, but I think they choke the seeds. We do not have our seeds in the bulbs. They grow and ripen above ground.

AIR AND WATER

Ray and his mother like to talk about things of earth and sky.

"What have you in your box, Ray?"

"Nothing at all, mamma."

"Are you sure there is nothing?"

"Yes. See, it is empty."

"*I* know something that is there."

"Look sharp, mamma; there is nothing here, not even a crumb.

Can *you* see anything?"

"No. I cannot see anything."

"Feel with your fingers. Do you find anything?"

"No. I do not find anything, but I know something is there.

It is air. No one can see it.

Air is about us everywhere.

This room is full of air. We cannot shut it out.

We could not live without it.

Air and water are like food to us.

Both should be as pure as we can get.

Pure air has no taste, no color, and no smell.

Pure water has no color, no taste, and no smell, but we can see it.

There is an ocean of water. It is grand and beautiful to see.

There is a greater ocean of air. We cannot see it.

Look at some water in a glass.

Drop into it a bright penny, a gold ring, a pretty stone.

See if they go out of sight.
Pour water slowly on a sponge.
Does it go out of sight?
Try to pile some up high on a plate.
Why can't you do it?"

"Water, I think you like to have your own way and go as you please."

WHAT THEY HAVE

If I were a fish, I should have scales.
If I were a bird, I should have feathers.
If I were a sheep, I should have wool.
If I were a horse, I should have hair.
If I were a cat, I should have fur.
If I were a snail, I should have a shell.
If I were a turtle, I should live in a box.

Scales, feathers, hair, and fur are nature dresses.
A shell is a dress and a house.

THE WATER DROPS

What happened to make this picture?

"Come, little water drops; come up here," said the sun one day. "I want your help."

So he drew them gently up. We did not even see them go.

"Isn't it nice up here in the sky?" said a tiny drop.

"No; I am afraid I shall fall," said his mate.

"Cling close to me," said the first. "It is fun to sail and sail all day."

"Can the drops below see us? I wonder how we look."

"We look like clouds," said a wise drop.

"There are so many of us together, we look large."

"Here 's a breeze; let 's play tag." And away they flew across the sky.

"The sun said we were to help. I wonder if this is helping."

"Wait and see," said the wise drop.

Soon the wind blew harder. It took them where it was colder.

The little drops formed into big ones.

Down to earth they tumbled.

Some gave the leaves a drink.

Some laid the dust.

Some washed the flowers. Each went somewhere and did something.

A TEMPEST

This is the rest of the water drops' story. They did not tell it themselves.

Some children were on a picnic.

It was in a grove near a pond.

An old man was there with a boat.

He took the children out in it.

Six could go at once.

A lady was there to set the table and take care of the children.

In the afternoon a little girl said, "Oh, look at that black cloud!"

"We must get on shore at once," said the man.

"Can we get home before it rains?" the children asked.

"No; we must stay under the trees."

The cloud got bigger every moment.

"I am afraid," said a little girl.

"I think it is fine," said the boys.

The wind began to act very queerly.

All the children felt a bit afraid.

Then came loud sounds and bright flashes.

"Come right into the boathouse, quick!" said the boatman.

They had just time to get there; then the wind came and the rain.

Oh, what sharp lightning! And the thunder almost made them deaf.

The girls put their hands over their ears.

"It is grand!" said the lady. "Yes, wonderful!" the old man answered.

"Are n't you afraid?" asked the girls. "The thunder is so loud."

"It is not the thunder that does harm; and lightning does not often strike."

But it did strike a tree that very day.

THE RAINBOW

Dear old Mother Nature!

How many beautiful sights she gives us!

Where does she get her nice colors?

I think they come from the sky.

We see them at sunset sometimes.

The rainbow has all of the bright ones.

We must make rainbow stories.

Here is my story:

The colors are sisters. The light is their mother.

They make a pretty path around the sky.

They come out sometimes after the rain.

What song is it that they sing?

"Do not be afraid, dear Earth; we will see that it shall never rain too long."

There is another rainbow story. It is about a pot of gold.

Who knows it?

TO THINK ABOUT

The lightning is an electric light.
How bright it is! But how quickly it goes out!
Men have learned to get and hold it.
They use it to light their streets and homes.
Wild lightning! What do you think of that?

A COOL CARPET

Who has a carpet in his house?

This cool carpet is not in a house.

It is out of doors all the time.

Rain or snow will not hurt it, and the sun will do it good.

Wind may shake it, if he is not rough. It is pretty when it waves.

We must not step on it too much; that will wear it out.

A school-yard carpet gets very thin.

This carpet is made of little plants.

They are blades of grass with roots.

How dry and hot the street feels!

How soft and cool the carpet is!

It is nice to lie down upon.

Pretty green lawns have velvet carpets.

The velvet is made of fine soft grass.

Do you like flowers in a carpet?

Daisies make the earth carpet pretty.

Dandelions find homes in it.

I have seen other flowers there.

What do you think is the best color for our cool earth carpet?

Suppose it had been bright red or blue.

When the grass grows too tall for a carpet and is cut, what does the sun make of it? What is the use of it then? What animals like to eat it?

How are clean pretty paths made across the grass carpets?

Study a blade of grass. It is a little pointed spear. Compare it with a leaf.

MAY. We say that Mother Nature does things. Who is Mother Nature? Did I ever see her?

FRED. We do not see her. We see what she is doing.

MAY. Maybe she is a great fairy; the mother of all the fairies in the world.

FRED. I think she is something like wind or air that is everywhere.

MAY. How many kinds of children she has! An elephant is hers and a bee. All the fishes and whales are hers, and the birds.

FRED. Yes, and the plants are her children too. What tall children trees are!

MAY. We are her children too, and our mothers and fathers. Her house is the great round earth. I wonder if she owns the sun and the stars.

FRED. She has to do what God tells her, just as we do. I think she is the one He has to take care of everything.

MAY. So do I.

FRED. Mother says that maybe she is invisible so that we may always think of Him.

MAY. I like that way of explaining it.

EARTH'S FAVORITES

Every one of us ought to know half a dozen trees, just as we do people.

These in the picture are good examples of the more common trees.

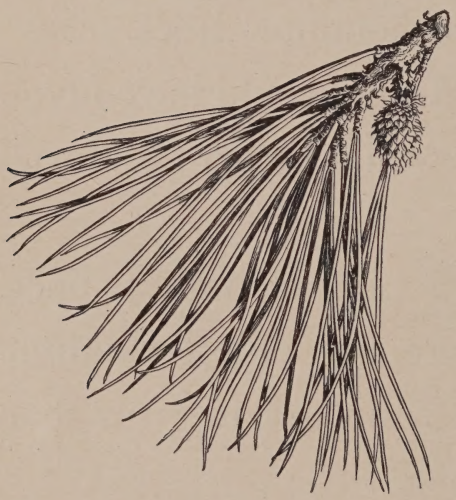
If the Earth Mother could have favorites, I think trees would be her best-loved children.

They are her biggest, tallest ones. Some of them are her oldest children. It takes longer for an oak to grow than it does for a man.

When an oak is grown up it lives longer than a man.

Trees do something each year to pay earth honor and make her beautiful.

We will choose the pine for a study. Here is a twig.



What can it tell us about itself and its tree?

We can bend the twig a little.

What did I hear the twig saying?

"I left the part of my tree that would not bend at home."

That was the stout trunk.

What is it made of that it does not bend?

Hear the twig again. "It has bark as I have, but, oh, so thick and rough!

And it has wood, as I have, only it is stout and stiff."

What else has the tree in the woods?

More branches, more twigs, and more leaves than I can count.

Do you call them leaves?

We call them pine needles.

They are the pine tree's leaves.

Now let the needles tell about themselves.

"We might have been flat and broad like other leaves. We think this way is best for us. All leaves are rolled up at first.

We wish to last the whole year

through. We stay on till the new leaves are ready to come. We have to bear the wind and rain. See how smooth we are, and how strong.

We needles make the nicest shade of any of the leaves.

One of us could not do much, so we stay together.

We bend and swing to let the wind and rain go through.

Then we stand up again."

If Mother Nature patches the ragged
leaves and vines,
I 'm sure she does her darning with
needles of the pines.

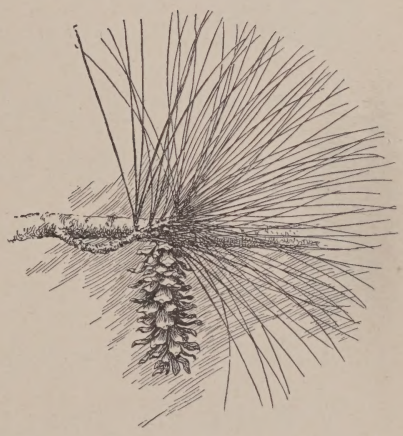
NEEDLES AND CONES

This twig has leaves and fruit.

The twig was pulled from the tree.

Now we will pull the needles from the twig. Who wishes to pull?

Count how many each of us has.



See, they make little tassels, and are all alike.

The five needles make a bunch.

One kind of pine has two needles in a bunch; this kind has five needles.

Look in the center of this tassel for a little bud.

That grows and makes a pine cone.

The cones are the pine tree's fruit.

They were soft and green at first. Now they are hard and brown. Find their scales. See how they are placed.

Each scale covers a pair of seeds.

The green cone scales were held close.

The dry one has its scales open.

Can you tell why?

Each seed has a little wing or sail to help the wind carry it.

What if all the seeds were planted?

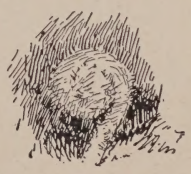
The pine tree was made to last long.

We thank you, pine-tree leaves, for staying all winter.

THE FERNS

Near the pine forest something grew that was quite different from it.

"Oh, see this queer ball growing," said Elsie. "See what it is.



Why, it is a little fern all rolled up.

Here is another and another."

They will not stay rolled long.

Elsie watched them every day.

How fast they grew!

"They must stretch as hard as they can," Elsie said.

"I wish they could have blossoms," she thought. "Perhaps if they had they would not make such pretty leaves."

This was a big thought for such a little girl.

One day she found brown spots on the leaves. They were on the under side.

"See," she said, "there are brown bugs on my pretty ferns!"

"That is fern fruit," said her mother. "When it is ripe seeds will fall. Then more ferns will grow."

LIVING SPRINGS

Close by the ferns was a little bubbling spring. It looked like a fountain.

Down in the ground are springs of water. Did you ever see a spring?

How the water bubbles and flows!

Dip it all out and more will flow in.

That is why they are called *living* springs.

They bubble and flow, that is, laugh and play like living things.

We cannot make them empty and dry.

Some springs are open so that we can see them.

More of them are underground. They give their water to the brooks.

Brooks flow into rivers and rivers run to the sea.

How glad we are to find a spring of cool, clear water when we are thirsty.

The cattle and all beasts and birds are glad.

What feeds the springs, do you think?

It is the kindly rain.

Do you sometimes wish it would not rain?

What would happen if you had your wish?

Where springs are found look for wild flowers and pretty mosses.

A WELL OF WATER

Where Ned lives a well had to be dug.

Let him tell us how it was done.

First a man came with a rod to find the right place.

He said he could tell by the rod where they would find water.

Then the men made a big round ring on the ground where he said it was.

They took off all the turf inside the ring; the turf was roots of grass.

Next the men dug up the soil.

They said it was nine inches deep.

The soil was put on the flower beds.

Under the soil was gravel.

At first it was fine and good. Ned's father had a use for it.

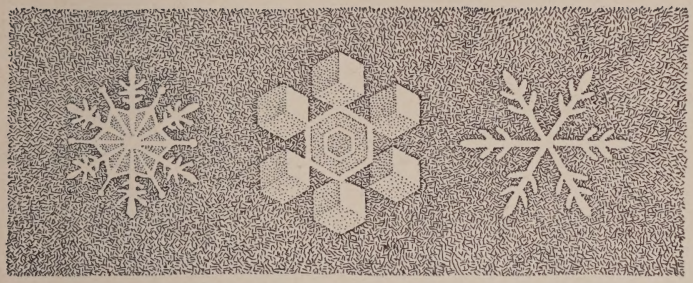
Deep down the gravel was rocky.

At last they found nothing but rock.

The well was not deep enough, so they had to go through the rock. That was hard work. At last the water began to flow. Where from, do you think?

Yes, from the springs in the ground.

There are better ways of getting water now. Wells are apt to become impure.



NATURE'S WARM CARPET

We do not buy this carpet.

No one makes it and it does not grow.

It comes to us out of the sky.

Some children never see this kind of carpet because they live where it is always warm.

A high mountain top has it for a cap all the time.

When it is clean it is white and sparkling.

Blades of green grass make the summer carpet.

Other tiny things make the winter one.

We call them snowflakes. They sometimes look like white stars.

The snow carpet is sometimes too thick to use. What shall we do about it?

How does the snow look coming down?

See if these lines tell its story:

> Whene'er a snowflake leaves the sky,
> It turns and turns to say "Good-by,
> Good-by, dear cloud, so cool and gray."
> Then lightly hastens on its way.

Did you ever see snowflakes do that?

Watch when the next snow falls.

Why do we call snow a warm carpet?

It is not warm to us.

It is like a woolly blanket to the ground and the roots of grass.

It keeps the cold air from them.

NATURE KINDNESS

The cat plays with her kitten.
The bird feeds her bird babies.
The hen broods her chickens.
The bear cares for her cubs.
The cow loves her calf.
The lioness would die for her young.
Your mother dearly loves you.
Who taught them all to love?
Love comes from loving hearts.
Love is the best thing in the world.

NATURE CRUELTY

Are the creatures ever unkind?
Are some of them cruel?
The hawk eats chickens.
The hen eats bugs and worms.
Cats watch for mice and birds.
Our baby pulls mamma's hair.
She laughs when mamma makes a face.
She pulls harder and laughs.
Does she know how it hurts?
Do the creatures know what hurts?

MOTHER NATURE'S ODD WAYS

The Earth Mother has odd ways in her world. She loves to have things useful; everything she owns is for use.

Not one lives just for itself.

Some of her plant children are for food.

She lets her animal children feed on plants. There is no other way for them to live.

There is no harm in that; it is good to be of use.

Who would choose to be a weed?

The plants could not live always.

Nature has other strange ways.

She lets her bird children feed on her insect children.

Has she a right to do that? She thinks she has.

She lets us have some of her birds and other creatures to eat.

We think the hen and turkey were made for us.

What other wild or tame creatures do we have for food?

Her wild children kill what they need.

We must be as good as they.

And we must never give pain for sport.

ORDER IN NATURE

Do all nature things behave well?

Let us try to find out.

The sun rises and sets every day.

What should we do if it did not?

Spring, summer, autumn, and winter come every year.

We have a moon visit every month.

The sea stays in its place, and so does the dry land.

The trees always have their own kinds of leaves and fruit.

The plants bear their own blossoms.

Rosebushes never bear lilies.

Apples never grow on pine trees.

Seeds never forget what kinds of plants they are to grow into.

Snow and frost come in winter.

Soft, warm rain comes in summer.

The grass is never blue or red or white. The sky is never green.

Little things do not always come just as we would like to have them.

Great things never fail us. Let us sing this little song:

God 's in his heaven,
All 's right with the world.

THE WORKS OF GOD[1]

God made the sky that looks so blue;
He made the grass so green;
He made the flowers that smell so sweet,
In pretty colors seen.

God made the sun that shines so bright,
And gladdens all I see;
It comes to give us heat and light;
How thankful we should be.

TAYLOR

SPRING SONG

"Awake!" said the sunshine; "'t is time to get up.
Awake, pretty daisy and sweet buttercup!
Why, you have been sleeping the whole winter long!
Hark! hark! don't you hear? 't is the bluebird's first song."

"Awake!" call the streamlets. "We 've lain here so still,
And now we must all go to work with a will."
"Wake!" says the warm breeze; "and you, willow tree,
Come, put on your leaves in a twinkling for me."

[1] The following selections correspond to subjects treated earlier in prose.

"Awake!" breathes the air from the blue sky above.
"Awake! for the air is all beauty and love.
Wake, little children, so merry and dear!
Ah, what were the spring if you were not here!"

SELECTED

THE HAPPY BIRD

Oh, if I were a little bird,
Happy would I be,
Perched all day on a leafy tree,
Or down in the meadow
Drinking in the dew;
I'd be a merry bird; say, would not you?

THE SONG OF THE BEE

Buzz! buzz! buzz!
This is the song of the bee.
His legs are of yellow;
A jolly good fellow,
And yet a great worker is he.

In days that are sunny
He's getting his honey;

In days that are cloudy
He 's making his wax:
On pinks and on lilies,
And gay daffodillies,
And columbine blossoms
He levies a tax!

Buzz! buzz! buzz!
The sweet-smelling clover
He, humming, hangs over;
The scent of the roses
Makes fragrant his wings.
He never gets lazy;
From thistle and daisy
And weeds of the meadow
Some treasure he brings.

Buzz! buzz! buzz!
From morning's first light
Till the coming of night
He 's singing and toiling
The summer day through.
Oh, we may get weary,
And think work is dreary;
'T is harder by far
To have nothing to do.

MARIAN DOUGLAS

THE VOICE OF THE GRASS

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere;
By the dusty roadside,
On the sunny hillside,
Close by the noisy brook,
In every shady nook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

. . . . . .

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere;
In the noisy city street
My pleasant face you 'll meet.
Cheering the sick at heart,
Toiling his busy part,
Silently creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come, creeping, creeping everywhere.
You cannot see me coming,
Nor hear my low, sweet humming;
For in the starry night
And the glad morning light
I come, quietly creeping everywhere.

MARY HOWITT

MERRY RAIN

Sprinkle, sprinkle, comes the rain,
Tapping on the window pane.
Trickling, coursing,
Crowding, forcing
Tiny rills
To the dripping window sills.

Laughing raindrops, light and swift,
Through the air they fall and sift;
Dancing, tripping,
Bounding, skipping
Through the street
With their thousand merry feet.

. . . . . .

In the woods by twig and spray
To the roots they find their way;
Rushing, creeping,
Doubling, leaping,
Down they go
To the waiting life below.

O the brisk and merry rain!
Bringing gladness in its train;
Falling, glancing,
Tinkling, dancing
All around.
Listen to its cheery sound.

SELECTED

SUNBEAMS

Merry little sunbeams,
Flitting here and there;
Joyous little sunbeams,
Dancing everywhere.
Come they with the morning light,
And chase away the gloomy night.

SELECTED

THE SUNBEAMS

"Now what shall I send to the earth to-day?"
Said the great round golden sun.
"Oh, let us go down there to work and play!"
Said the sunbeams, every one.

EMILIE POULSSON

IF I WERE A SUNBEAM

If I were a sunbeam,
I know what I 'd do;
I would seek white lilies
Rainy woodlands through;
I would steal among them,
Softest light I 'd shed,
Until every lily
Raised its drooping head.

LUCY LARCOM

DISAPPOINTED SNOWFLAKES

Four and twenty snowflakes
Came tumbling from the sky,
And said, "Let 's make a snowdrift;
We can if we but try."
So down they gently fluttered
And lighted on the ground,
And when they were all seated
They sadly looked around.
"We 're very few indeed," sighed they,
"And we sometimes make mistakes;
We cannot make a snowdrift
With four and twenty flakes."
Just then the sun peeped round a cloud
And smiled at the array,
And the disappointed snowflakes
Melted quietly away.

SELECTED

"Help one another," the snowflakes said,
As they cuddled down in their fleecy bed.
"One of us here would not be felt,
One of us there would quickly melt;
But I 'll help you, and you help me,
And then what a splendid drift there 'll be!"

From the cloudy fountain
Down to the mountain,
Down from the mountain into the vale,
It 's ho, to go, to drift and sail,
To glisten along the wintry gale!
Round and round,
With never a sound,
Hill to hollow,
We fall and follow;
Here and there, here and there,
Riding the ways of the air.

It 's hither and thither,
Every whither,
Over the land and over the lake;
Winds may sleep or winds may wake,
Thicker and faster, flake to flake,
White, all white,
Spirits of light,
Hill to hollow,
We flock and follow,
Here and there, everywhere,
Riding the ways of the air.

JOHN VANCE CHENEY

JACK FROST

Some one has been in the garden,
Nipping the flowers so fair;
All the green leaves are withered.
Now, who do you think has been there?

Some one has been in the forest,
Cracking the chestnut burs.
Who is it dropping the chestnuts,
Whenever a light wind stirs?

Some one has been on the hilltop,
Chipping the moss-covered rocks.
Who has been cracking and breaking
Them into fragments and blocks?

Some one has been at the windows,
Marking on every pane.
Who made those glittering pictures
Of lace work, fir trees, and grain?

Some one is all the time working
Out on the pond so blue,
Bridging it over with crystal.
Who is it, now? Can you tell who?

SELECTED

Just a little every day, that 's the way!
Seeds in darkness swell and grow,
Tiny blades flush through the snow,
Slowly — slowly — at the first,
That 's the way, just a little every day.

Is this a time to be gloomy and sad,
When our Mother Nature laughs around;
When even the deep blue heavens look glad,
And gladness beams from the blossoming ground?

LITTLE HIAWATHA

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the waters,
Sounds of music, words of wonder;
"Minne-wawa!" said the pine-trees,
"Mudway-aushka!" said the water.

. . . . . .

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,

How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

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